

[22 March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

include asset endowment programmes, wage employment programmes and skill generation programmes.

Number of people below poverty line

†2970. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of people living below poverty line in rural areas of the country is not declining even after fifty years of independence;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have taken so far any policy decisions under the national agenda in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) The estimates of the incidence of rural poverty made by the Planning Commission from the large sample surveys on consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). The percentage of people living below the poverty line in rural areas declined from 56.4% in 1973-74 to 37.3% in 1993-94 and the number of people below the poverty line in rural areas declined from 261.3 million to 244.0 million during the same period. On the basis of the 30-day recall tabulation in the Key Results of the 55th Round large sample survey of Household Consumer Expenditure in India carried out by the NSSO, 193.24 million of the rural population (27.09% of the total rural population) lived below the poverty line in 1999-2000.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) There is a three-pronged action to alleviate and reduce the poverty in the country. These are: (i) acceleration of economic growth, (ii) human, and social development through literacy,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

education, health, nutrition, meeting of the minimum needs, elevation of social and economic status of the weaker sections of the society, etc., and (iii) direct attack on poverty through employment and income generating programmes and assets-building for the poor.

The increase in income of the people living below the poverty line occur from the joint impact of general growth process and direct income generation of the poor arising from various anti-poverty programmes introduced from time to time by the Government for their upliftment. Since the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), the Government has been implementing employment and asset generation schemes for the upliftment of the people living below the poverty line. These schemes are mainly of two types, self-employment and wage employment. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) has been the major self-employment programme and it has been in operation in all the blocks of the country since 1980. The wage employment programme initially was National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) during the Sixth Plan period. In the Seventh Plan, another wage employment programme under the name Rural Labour Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) was introduced. Then in 1989, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) was launched by merging the National Rural Employment Programme and the Rural Labour Employment Guarantee Programme, and it became the main wage-employment programme. In addition, several programmes to help the poor were also in operation until March, 1999. These programmes are: Million Wells Scheme (MWS), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (SITRA).

From 1st April, 1999, these programmes, excepting EAS and JRY have been restructured into single self-employment programme called the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) with the primary objectives of focussed approach to poverty alleviation, capitalising advantages of group lending, and overcoming the problems associated with multiplicity of programmes. Also, from 1st April, 1999, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) has been restructured as Jawahar Gram

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Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) with the primary objective of creation of demand driven community village infrastructure including durable assets at the village level and assets to enable the rural poor to increase the opportunities for sustained employment. Its secondary objective is generation of supplementary employment for the unemployed poor in the rural areas. The wage employment under the programme is given to Below Poverty Lines (BPL) families.

From 1.12.1997, Swarna Jayanti Sahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) is the main poverty alleviation programme in the urban areas. The SJSRY, which has subsumed all the earlier three urban poverty alleviation programmes, viz., Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY), Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP), Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUPEP), seeks to provide gainful employment to unemployed or underemployed urban and educated up to IX standard for setting up self employment ventures or provision of wage employment. The implementation of SJSRY is relying on suitable community structures on the UBSP pattern and delivery of inputs under this programme is through the medium of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and such community structure.

Reconstitution of Hindi Salahakar Samiti

2971. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) when the Hindi Salahakar Samiti was reconstituted recently in his Ministry;

(b) the number of sittings of the Samiti held during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the efforts made to conduct its meetings regularly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) A Joint Hindi Salahakar Samiti of Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation was reconstituted *vide* Planning Commission's Resolution No. E-11015/1/98-Hindi, dated 26th June, 2000.